

ELEMENT #1

FACILITATIVE & DISTRIBUTIVE LEADERSHIP

- The Principal is responsible for ensuring that the collective vision of the whole school is kept at the forefront of the work. As such, the Principal establishes a common framework of high expectations and accountability. Supervisors and all staff are empowered to work towards common goals, within and across SLCs.
- The Principal establishes a culture of empowerment and accountability. As a result, SLC Leadership Teams are involved in the decisions about the use of SLC budget and resources, assessing the effectiveness of the framework, scheduling, and hiring of staff.
- Within each SLC, assistant principals and teacher leaders work together to provide ongoing and consistent feedback to teachers – all focused on improving instruction and measurable outcomes for students, as reported in the Quality Review and Progress Reports.
- Assistant principals and teacher leaders promote collaboration and the opportunity for teachers to meet, plan, and learn together within each SLC.
- OPD will create a process to enable talented principals, APs, and teacher leaders to have opportunities to utilize their expertise to improve student achievement - within their school communities and beyond.

ELEMENT # 2

DEDICATED TEACHING, LEARNING, & SUPPORT TEAMS

- Groups of students range from 250-450 students per SLC, and include English Language Learners and students with special needs.
- Ideally, students in 9th and 10th grade spend close to 100% of their time in their SLC, and a minimum of 75% in the upper grades, depending on electives and other specialized classes. Ideally, teachers spend at least 75% of their time in their SLC.
- Teachers work collaboratively across and within subject areas and SLCs, with a primary focus on working with colleagues who share the same students.
- Teachers, guidance counselors, and support staff participate in professional development and training on the effective use of common planning time. Within each SLC, teams engage in common planning time and collaboration for a minimum of two hours per week.
- The principal collaborates with SLC leaders and the UFT to develop a process that leads to the effective use of staff capacity to ensure student achievement.
- SLC Teams monitor academic progress, assist with career and college planning, and provide assistance and support for social and behavioral progress. Every student has a significant and ongoing adult connection in the SLC.
- Within each SLC, teachers, students, and parents engage in ongoing communication about student achievement and progress.

ELEMENT #3

A DATA DRIVEN SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY

- SLC teams engage in ongoing professional development to hone their skills on using data to improve instruction.
- SLC teams of teachers meet regularly to analyze student work for evidence of progress, mastery of standards, and effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies.
- Diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments are used to drive reflection and the process for improvement of instructional planning and academic interventions.
- Every SLC has its own inquiry team. The school's data specialist supports the work of the inquiry teams - providing baseline and historical student data, disaggregated data on student achievement, cohort information, updates on academic interventions, etc.
- Using the ARIS system, SLC data is disaggregated and reviewed by the principal, APs, and teacher leaders to ascertain strengths and weaknesses of each SLC and to make appropriate adjustments in programming and staffing to improve student progress.

ELEMENT #4

RIGOROUS CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION FOR ALL STUDENTS, CENTERED ON A UNIFYING FOCUS

- The goal of all small learning communities is to improve teaching, learning, and student outcomes. A rigorous, coherent curriculum should reinforce SLC objectives. The coherence is provided by theme or other unifying principles that serve as a vehicle for teachers to plan together and to encourage connections within and across content areas.
- Planning for post-secondary education for all students, including students with special needs and English Language Learners, is clearly defined and is the responsibility of each SLC team. Tracking is eliminated.
- All students have access to college preparatory courses including AP and IB, and the appropriate supports for them to be successful. In some cases, these courses are offered across SLCs, but are rooted in course work offered in every SLC.
- There is ongoing professional development for teachers and administrators to support effective teaching, learning, and assessment practices.
- The support of intermediaries and other school support organizations is aligned to the goal of rigorous and relevant theme based curriculum for all students, and there are ongoing conversations among all parties.